

THE CATALYSING DECISION

THE HINGE ON WHICH SEVEN YEARS OF HISTORY TURNED

I ask myself: What was that single decisive event which catalysed the unexpected developments of the last seven years of history. That history has certainly set in motion a whole new series of processes, the overthrow of old rivalries and ~~unw~~strongly held ideological positions. The formation of new power configurations and new ideological formulations takes time, and the air has to clear before humanity gets back its basic orientation.

We have been so dazzled by the upheavals of history that we remain unable to arrive at any conclusive assessment of what has really happened, in our country as well as globally. India herself has entered a new period of history, where her own capitulation to the world market economy system has become more total and less hesitant. What has happened in India is not unconnected with the global turn of history.

Most people would agree that Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the now defunct CPSU, played a key rôle in inducing the big changes in the world picture. What exact-

ly did he do? On that there is considerable disagreement.

I was privileged, a few months ago, to attend a conference of 75 ex-presidents and former prime ministers from about 40 of the nations of the world, held in Seoul, Korea, without attracting too much attention from the media. I was invited, as a sort of Chaplain. For me, it was a fascinating experience to look at a fair sample of the sort of people who ran our world.

Ideologically most of these politicians were either centre or right of centre. So their keynote speaker was General Alexander Haig, former Commander of NATO and former U S Secretary of State. Haig, still very much of an unreconstructed Hawk, proved nevertheless an eloquent and persuasive speaker. In his keynote address Haig acknowledged the place of Gorbachev in history, but suggested that we err grievously in giving him credit for promoting democracy or for his perestroika-glasnost. Gorbachov's great contribution was, according to Haig, military-strategic. He had the courage to realise the evident fact that the Soviet military machine was no match for western military might. It took a lot of courage and sagacity, not just to realise this fact, but also to take steps to work out its consequences. This is what Gorbachev

did, and this is what History will eventually recognize him for, Haig thinks.

Could Haig be right? Up to a point, yes. I would of course put it differently. Gorbachev, along with the CPSU which he led, gave up the costly stance of confrontation against an exploitative and hegemonistic world market economy system, capitulated and made peace with the enemy admitting discomfiture. Gorbachev did this with the support of a few in the top leadership of the CPSU like Yakovlev and Shevernadze, but against the position of others like Ligachev, Kryutchkov, Marshall Akhromyov and General Yazov. Ligachev got thrown out and Akhromyov committed suicide(?). Yazov and Kryutchkov met their destiny in the aborted and disastrous coup, which tolled also the end of Gorbachov's leadership.

The Gorbachov strategy was noble and well intentioned, based on a vision that failed to come true. The basic philosophy was something like this. Under conditions of military confrontation, the market economy has always the edge over a socialist economy; but under conditions of peaceful competition between the two systems, the socialist system would forge ahead leaving the market economy system obsolete and unattractive, doomed to disappearance. The reason why the

socialist system cannot provide sufficient consumer comforts to its people, is primarily that it spends disproportionately too much of its social production on defense and military confrontation. Once that burden is taken off the socialist system, it will blossom out, while without defence budgets and the armaments race, the market economy system would not be able to keep expanding its markets perennially, which constant expansion is essential for the system's survival.

We cannot really say that Gorbachev's ideological position has been proved by history to be untrue. To say so is to ignore other significant variables in the equation. The kind of command economy developed in the Soviet Union was not viable at all, under conditions of war or peace. Nor was the internal disintegration compatible with a viable society - the erosion of mutual trust among people, by a process of relentless invigilation into private lives, through a colossal system of espionage which was both inhuman and soul-destroying, and the dampening of creativity by a totalitarian system which left little room for personal freedom and initiative. A huge and largely corrupt bureaucratic edifice of officialdom managed the economy - production and distribution alike in all three sectors of the economy (agriculture, industry and services. In that kind of democratic

centralism, there is little room for exercise of honest democracy or for people's training in it.

The confrontationist, closed system, sought to be justified on account of a powerful, hostile and armed market economy system, was the prop for the disintegrating social-economic structure. The prop was taken away when the confrontationist stance was abandoned, and when glasnost or openness was introduced into a closed society. No amount of perestroika could restore health to a rotten socio-economic structure.

Gorbachov was not, however, the only actor on the scene. Others were waiting in the wings to take over the action. Since there was no script, those waiting in the wings could not be certain whether the taking away of the confrontationist prop was real or just a trick to trap them. They made every possible test from 1985 to 1989. Gorbachev had given his pledge to all that mattered - Bush, Thatcher, The Pope, Kohl, Mitterand and all the main players of the western alliance. Jim Baker was assured that all international conflicts (South Africa, Middle East, Indo-China and so on) could be handled by the western alliance in a conciliatory way, in consultation with, but without interference from, the

Soviet Union.

The first test was to heighten the pace and intensity of the ongoing destabilisation programme within socialist countries. Occasionally there was a murmur of protest, from people like Akhromyov, Yazov and Kryutchkov, but no threat or use of force from the Soviet Union.

The second test was a series of visits from established hawks from the west to the Soviet Union. Towards the culmination of the process came U S Defense Secretary and Superhawk Frank Carlucci's Fourth Military Summit with Defense Minister General Yazov in Moscow in 1988. Ex-CIA Deputy Director Carlucci was a hardnosed businessman (Chairman of Sears Roebuck, 1982-86, and confidante of the right wing. Yazov was able to give Carlucci conclusive and indubitable evidence that the Soviet Union had given up its stance of confrontation, and wanted to co-operate fully with the west. (See **New Times**, June 1988). Once Carlucci was convinced the whole clandestine machinery of the west, acted. An enormous programme of destabilisation, long on the boards, quickly went into operation all over central and eastern Europe.

The Polish elections in 1989 was entirely managed and financed from the west. Solidarity on its own could not have

defeated the Polish United Workers' Party however corrupt and unpopular the latter was. As the U S Congress financed bodies like National Foundation for Democracy openly organised the Polish election, neither the U S S R nor Jaruzelski raised any objection. Soviet Foreign Minister Shevernadze had no hesitation in yielding to the pressure from the west - yet another test - demanding that the USSR apologize for the intervention in Afghanistan.

The Berlin Wall drama was quickly orchestrated and efficiently carried out, U S A and F R G being the main actors. Once Poland fell, the other five could easily be manipulated - Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria and G D R. The whole operation could be completed by December 1989 because the plans had been well laid by the west. If there was the slightest possibility that the Soviet Union would interfere in any act of this drama, the west could not have dared execute it. Gorbachov had effectively removed all doubts in the west, and so the west could act without risk. There was some hope that the Soviet Union would try to intervene; this would have been partly welcomed; because that would have changed history by making USSR rather than Iraq the object upon which western military technological prowess could have been demonstrated; and in 1989 western military

technology had not yet reached the stage which it had obviously reached in January 1991. The Gulf War was simply the capstone of a long programme for establishing western hegemony over the entire globe - though China and Japan still remain issues to be settled.

Despite all that the world is by no means uni-polar. Germany has her own ideas, about which she thinks the less said the better, but she has given to understand that she is not a permanent member of the American team. Japan is growing increasingly resentful about US pressure, and could one day react quite precipitately, were it not for the fact that Nagasaki, Hiroshima and Pearl Harbour are still fresh in the world's memory. The European Community is no pole, since its internal dissensions are too strong to let it act with a single will. The debt-ridden American economy is in bad shape and one of these days a persistent recession might bring on the final collapse, which even decisive control of world finance (which America does not have) can not prevent.

What about India? In a desperate Foreign Exchange and Balance of Trade crunch induced by three irresponsible and uninformed Prime Ministers (Rajiv, VP and Chandrasekhar) lavishly spending what we did not have, we have taken the



easy way out, just as Gorbachev's CPSU did. There is no way we can get out of a debt and inflation crunch. By the end of this year, we may want to try the hard way out, but it will no doubt be too late to get out of the bondage into which we have already gotten ourselves entangled.

Where then is hope? Is it too idle to expect history to spring a few more surprises on us?

P Gregorios

# Has history ended?

## Reflections on what is going on in the world

By Paulos Mar Gregorios

Last summer (1989), Francis Fukuyama, the 36-year-old deputy director of the U.S. State Department's policy planning staff, published in the Washington journal *The National Interest* an erudite essay on "The End of History." Months before the beginning of the fall of Eastern European communist regimes in August 1989, Fukuyama argued that history had come to an end in 1989. His judgment was based largely on the pre-August developments in the Soviet Union. Of course in his position he had access to much more information than the rest of us ordinary mortals can ever hope to have. This is what he said:

"What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the cold war or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such; that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of western liberal democracy as the final form of human development." (emphasis added)

Obviously, to Fukuyama, a student of Hegel, 'history' means the process by which human socio-economic systems develop and mature. He argues that western liberal democracy is the final form of human socio-political development. This western liberal democracy had only two main contenders — fascism and communism. The first was finished off by the Second World War in 1945. Forty years after that the second contender, communism, has also begun to crack up, with the collapse of the Soviet economy and Gorbachev's unsuccessful effort in the last five years to bolster it through *perestroika-glasnost*.

The argument of Fukuyama is a further development of Zbigniew Brzezinski's *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, which appeared earlier. For Brzezinski, communism began in 1917 and has come to an end some 70 years later. Fukuyama agrees and bewails the fact that the period of "post-history" that has now begun, is going to be dull and drab, no fun at all, since the tournament is now over. The finalists in the last match were the two children of the European Enlightenment of the 18th and 19th centuries — Marxist socialism and western liberal-democratic capitalism. The trophy goes to the latter. No further series will be played.

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The game is over. All can now go home.

That is one way of reading history. There must be other ways. Let me suggest some.

### I. The Fall of Yalta Communism

What has indeed collapsed is what I call "Yalta Communism." It was at Yalta in 1945 that Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin came to an agreement about dividing the spoils among the victors of the Second World War. The Soviet Union received as its share a "sphere of influence" — East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania — and imposed Yalta Communism on them. In these countries communism of the Marxist-Leninist variety has now virtually collapsed, with only a minority of six to 20 percent of the voters still in principle loyal to it.

Each of these six nations had a different alignment of forces at the end of the war. Some features, however, were common to all. First, all six were reacting against Hitler's Nazism imposed from above by force. Second, all six had Marxism-Leninism also imposed upon them. This latter is totally inconsistent with Marxist ideology. A socialist government can come to power only through the struggle of the people, led by the industrial working class. That was not how it came about in these six countries (though there was, at least in Czechoslovakia, something of a people's struggle in which supporters of the west lost out).

The downfall of Yalta Communism is indeed a great act of history. When the trade union federation Solidarity defeated the communists in Poland's August '89 elections, no one could predict that the whole edifice of Yalta Communism would collapse so soon, i.e., in less than five months.

Of course there were many factors contributing to that act of history. Three of these are human actions that we can readily identify.

First, the Gorbachev team abrogated the prevailing Brezhnev doctrine of international communist solidarity. If in accordance with the Brezhnev doctrine, the Soviet Union had sought to intervene in any of these six countries along the pattern of Hungary 1956 and Czechoslovakia 1968, history would have developed in quite a different way, including the possibility of a third world war.

Second, there was concerted action on the part of the

western powers in 1989 to bring about the downfall of Yalta Communism.

Fact one: Solidarity, a trade union federation with limited resources and little political experience, could not have won the Polish elections in August 1989 without massive western help. The National Foundation for Democracy was set up and funded by the American Congress precisely to fund such operations legally. With some voluntary help from Poles abroad, nearly the entire cost of Solidarity's election campaign was met by the West, who shipped to Poland even paper, printing ink, printing machines and copying machines.

Fact two: The escape of several East Germans to the West through Hungary and Czechoslovakia was a well-orchestrated scenario masterminded by West Germany with the aid and assistance of other western powers, including the U.S.A. The breach in the Berlin Wall and its later collapse was carefully and successfully engineered by the West. Without that scheme to break the wall, Yalta Communism could not have collapsed so easily or so soon.

Third, there should be no underestimation of the great role played by the Roman Catholic Church and especially by Pope John Paul II in bringing about the downfall of Yalta Communism. In fact, a Polish pope was deliberately chosen more than a decade ago with precisely this end in view. The pope has been devoting more than half of his time, effort and personal staff to Polish affairs ever since he was elected. Without his solid support, Solidarity could not have come into being or survived the nearly successful effort of the Jaruzelski regime to suppress it. The pope's actions, however, were not confined to Poland. The Catholic bishops in Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany played a quiet but very decisive role in undermining Yalta Communism from within. Western governments were long before 1989 in close contact with select persons in these Catholic hierarchies.

History thus is a synthetic product of concerted and preplanned human actions, along with an unpredictable coincidence of other factors brought together by what secularists would regard as happenstance.

## II. The future of socialism

Is socialism finally dead? Some people think so. Certainly socialism of the Bolshevik type has proved to be unworkable. But China and the Soviet Union, as well as Cuba and North Korea are still basically communist political economies. Among them they have more than one-fourth of the world's peoples. Their mode of production is still more than 90 percent communist. That may change tomorrow. Even in Eastern Europe, six to 20 percent of the people still profess Marxist socialism. What about communists elsewhere, in Italy and France, and in almost all the countries of the world? The number of states

controlled by communists may dwindle in the near future, but the worldwide revolutionary Marxist movement of the oppressed will not immediately disappear. That much seems certain.

What will happen to Eastern European countries as they move from socialism to market economy? Housing, which has hitherto been almost 80 percent subsidized by the state, will soon cost five times as much. Education and health care, which have been virtually free, will no longer be so. Public transportation, which has

also been heavily subsidized, will shoot up in cost. What about guaranteed employment, state-subsidized sports and a dozen other social amenities hitherto enjoyed by the people? Wages may go up, but not at the same pace as prices. As international capitalism fixes its tentacles on these economies and wealth begins to be drained out, as more and more people become jobless or underpaid, will there be no protests? Socialism, of course with a more human face, has its role cut out for the future.

## III. The future of the South

The North-South gap shows no signs of narrowing. It is in fact widening with every passing day. The debt trap is getting tighter. Justice for the poor in all countries cannot be denied much longer. Revolutionary movements all over the world can no longer look to the Soviet Union for leadership or military or economic support. The oppressed and the exploited of the world are thrown back on their own resources. The middle classes are growing in numbers and strength, but so are the underprivileged. The confrontation between these two will certainly take new forms of expression. The have-nots and the marginalized will not forever just take it lying down.

The transnational corporations will grow in power. Their empire is still expanding. But empires built on injustice do not endure forever. For them history has not come to an end. Only the triumph of justice and human dignity all over the world can mark the end.

## IV. The future of peace and disarmament

Tensions have relaxed. Detente, long longed for, has finally surfaced. But peace and disarmament seem still very far in the future.

Disarmament negotiations have yielded dramatic results. Troop sizes are coming down. Military budgets of the United States and Soviet Union, let us hope, will continue to go down. But we cannot realistically hope the same for Japan, China or Germany, or for many developing countries like India and Pakistan.

Not a single nuclear warhead has so far been destroyed. The Intermediate Nuclear Force treaty has managed to destroy intermediate and short-range delivery systems (about 3.6 percent of the total world arsenal). Their

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warheads are now being transferred to other delivery systems and will be used as bargaining chips. Even if we manage to get a bilateral agreement to destroy 50 percent of the nuclear warheads, we will still have enough to commit terricide many times over. New and more dastardly weapons are being added to the arsenals every year. One-third of nuclear destructive power is being transferred to the navies, and naval disarmament has not yet even found its place on the disarmament agenda.

The fond dream of a world without weapons of mass destruction still remains a dream.

Conversion of economies from military to civilian production has marked but slow progress thus far.

The concept of global common security, based on trust and mutual negotiation on the basis of balance of interests, has only been talked about, but nations seem still unready to move in that direction.

The future is still mighty bleak, but hope lingers on. This is no time to let up on the struggle for peace.

#### **V. The resurgence of ethnic regionalism**

The Soviet Union is not the only country where we notice the resurgence of ethnic regionalism coupled with religious fundamentalism. In Yugoslavia (Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Macedonians), in China (Hans, Central Asian Muslims, Tibetan Buddhists), in India (Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs), in Ireland (Catholics and Protestants) and in many other countries, interregional, interethnic and interreligious conflicts defy management or settlement.

Racial conflicts are on the rise again, between Blacks and Whites in many countries — in some countries even between Blacks and East Indians. The native peoples of the Americas, of Australia and the Dalits of India are beginning to assert their identities and dignity, which have for long been trampled upon and to demand cultural as well as political autonomy.

In the Soviet Union itself, the Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia will gain their independence in the

course of a year or even earlier. Georgia and Armenia, the two Christian republics (their Christianity is at least half a millennium older than the Russian Orthodox Church) have also to be granted some measure of autonomy. The six Islamic republics of Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghiz, Turkmenistan and Tajekistan will not for long tolerate Russian domination.

The nation-state is fast becoming obsolete. Territorial boundaries can no longer be justified on a rational basis in a world of growing internationalism in economy and culture. We have to invent institutions that facilitate a global community without destroying rich cultural and historic identities. The ecological crisis has given us a strong push in that direction, but human political creativity has not so far measured up very well.

#### **By way of concluding**

Fukuyama is dead wrong on one point. History has far from ended. The triumph of western liberal-democratic capitalism is bound to be short-lived. History, future history, far from being dull and drab, offers more exciting challenges than humanity can easily cope with. Long live history! The Lord of all history is beckoning us on and goes before.



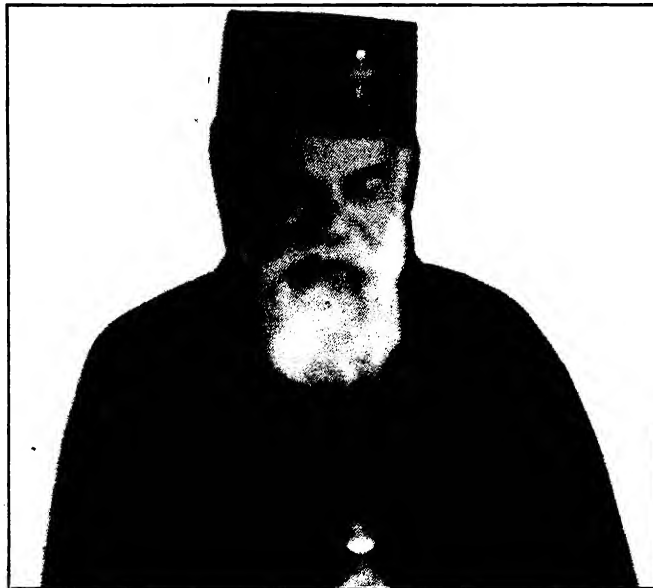
*Bishop Paulos Mar Gregorios is a president of the World Council of Churches and teaches at the Orthodox Seminary, Kottayam Kerala, India. As T. Paul Verghese, he graduated from GC in 1952. He took his new name when he became Metropolitan Bishop in the Orthodox Syrian Church in the East.*

# Long live history!

**Bishop Paulos Mar Gregorios makes a critical analysis of Francis Fukuyama's *End of History*, originally published in *National Interest*, a Washington quarterly, and serialised in *Express Weekend*, in the issues dated October 14, 21, 28 and November 4.**

WASHINGTON intellectual circles seldom discuss philosophy — especially 19th century Hegelian political philosophy about the end of history. The Japanese-American Francis Fukuyama's exciting thesis brought Hegel back into the discussion, though briefly. Top western "intellectuals" were invited to comment on the thesis that we are now at the end of history — not merely at the *fin de siècle*, the last decade of the 20th century.

Chicago University's Allan Bloom, Pierre Hassner of the French National Foundation for Political Sciences, New York University's Grande Dame Gertrude Himmelfarb, American Enterprise Institute's Irving Kristol, New York Senator Patrick Moynihan, and Washington's Kremlin-watcher Stephen Sestanovich (Director of Soviet



**Bishop Paulos Mar Gregorios**

Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies) were the six liberal intellectuals invited to hail the Fukuyama thesis with some fanfare in *The National Interest* of Summer 1989.

Francis Fukuyama, aged 36, is Deputy Director of the US State Department's policy planning staff, a sort of all-American super-think-tank. The thesis presented in an erudite essay entitled "The End of History?" is bold indeed.

"What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the cold war or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such, that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of western liberal democracy as the final form of human development." (emphasis added).

Whether we agree with the thesis or not, we need to come to terms with it. What he calls history is the growth and development of socio-economic systems, as the main process through which humanity becomes human. History in this sense, he now claims, has come to an end. One system which has come to full flower in the last couple of centuries has now vanquished its main contenders and has triumphed as final for it has no more rivals. This end product of history is western liberal democracy with the market economy.

It had only two main rivals — fascism and communism. The first came to an end with the

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defeat of Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy and Hirohito's Japan in 1945. Liberalism and Marxism remained on the arena as the two finalists in the tournament of socio-economic systems. Now in the finals communism has been defeated. Under Gorbachev's leadership, Marxism-Leninism has admitted defeat and is capitulating to liberal democracy as the triumphant victor. This is the main substance of Fukuyama's thesis, in my own words, of course.

He admits there are two possible contenders still challenging liberal democracy/market economy capitalism. These are "religion" and "nationalism". But religion hardly qualifies as a political rival of secular liberal humanism. The latter was born out of Christianity's failure to do justice to the legitimate political, economic and social aspirations of human beings. The religious state (example Islamic state) has tried to reinstate itself. But it has not proved viable, and has no future. Theocratic states are an anachronism, and history has already rejected the idea.

Neither has nationalism much of a future. It is dead in the developed world; it spawned two world wars in this century. The advanced countries are moving beyond to internationalism and trans-nationalism (the European Community, for example). Nationalism survives in developing countries, mostly as a negative animus against foreign domination in culture, politics and economics. As a positive programme, however, it has nothing very attractive to offer; it belongs to the backyard of history.

Nationalism is neither a product of liberalism nor an essential contradiction within it. It may cause some conflicts inside the framework of liberalism.

# Does history end?

But on its own it cannot survive. The judgment of history is patently against nationalism.

The triumph of western liberal democracy is thus fairly final. It has no contenders left on the arena. It has proved itself in history. Of course, one does not rule out the rise of new ideologies. For the moment there is no such contender on the horizon. Events will happen, conflicts will continue. In that sense history will continue, but not history as evolution of new social systems. The basic contours are unlikely to change very much. Since competition is now the acknowledged principle, conflict becomes unavoidable. But the great conflict between contending ideologies is over.

All are now free to join the victor's team. Non-Europeans can learn the values of liberal democracy and play the game according to its rules. Liberalism is no longer one of the teams playing. It has been promoted as umpire and now calls the shots. Of course the umpire is not any single nation as such; it is the system that lays down the rules of the game, umpires the play and awards the trophies. World politics will be "common-marketed". Asians, Africans, Latin Americans, Russians, Amerindians, whoever they are, can either join the game or be confined to the dustbin of history.

History has ended, and we are already entering the post-historical era, says Fukuyama. Alas that is already a sad era. Not much room for philosophy or culture or for any great heroism except in the game of satisfying consumer demands.

"In the post-historical period

there will be neither art nor philosophy, just the perpetual caretaking of the museum of human history ... Perhaps this very prospect of centuries of boredom at the end of history will serve to get history started once again".

Wow, what a glorious prospect this end of history! I wish only to make four brief comments on the essay.

1) The analysis is superb, brimful of scintillating insights. And it should have helped to start an intelligent discussion. The fact that it has not done so is itself an indictment on this claim of a triumphant liberalism. Zbigniew Brzezinski's book (*The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century*) and the Fukuyama essay have led to a number of editorials in journals and newspapers run by the market economy establishment. The *London Times* for example, has already chronicled the death of communism, and proceeded to erect grave-stones to Marxism. It all smacks of wishful thinking.

The wishful thinkers of course want their wishes to come true. Communism has collapsed in Poland and Hungary, and is in the process of collapse in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Rumania and Bulgaria. Little socialist countries like Cuba, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, North Korea and Ethiopia cannot hold on much longer. And if things develop on schedule USSR and China will also revert to market economy capitalism, by stages or suddenly. Fukuyama has not gone into the details of the schedule, his optimism is tempered by the pessimistic vision about the

drabness and dullness of the end-of-history era.

2) Fukuyama is not the first to make predictions about the end of history. Kant, in the 18th century talked about peace through the growth of democratic or republican governments and the substitution of trade for war as a way of making oneself wealthy. Hegel saw the end of history already in 1806 when Napoleon's troops were marching into Jena, where Hegel lived. Nietzsche conjured up the "last man" as the crazy, unhappy and self-assertive man of power. Spengler predicted the decline of the West. Alexandre Kojeve predicted the triumph of reason in the rational state which for him, had already emerged as the end of history. Both the French Revolution and the Bolshevik Revolution as also the American Revolution thought they had ushered in the end of history. It seems history has proved all of them to have been sadly (or gladly) mistaken. Little reason to think that Brzezinski and Fukuyama are more right.

3) If we must cite Hegel, let us do so a little more carefully. His 1806 (when he was 36) outburst about the end of history having arrived with Napoleon as History on Horseback was proved to be fairly foolish, as he himself came to realise later. For the mature Hegel, history is The Absolute Idea (God, if you prefer) working out its potentialities into the actuality of history through the principles of dialectical reason — the Ultimate Spirit (Geist) under the conditions of finitude. If he were living today, he would have seen capitalism and communism as

dialectical thesis and anti-thesis moving towards a synthesis at a higher level — only to begin another cycle, where the new synthesis becomes a new thesis to generate its own anti-thesis and to move on further up in the spiral of progress.

4) Socialism is not quite dead. What has died is a historical manifestation of it. Marxist socialism, under Gorbachev's leadership is revising itself in eight different ways which I can only list. (a) Global humanism replacing the class struggle as basic framework for thinking and acting; (b) the necessary role of capitalism and the market economy in developing the technological and organisational structure of future communism; (c) the necessity therefore of the two systems co-existing not only internationally, but also within each nation for some time; (d) the need for checks and balances like a Congress of People's Deputies to offset the danger of arbitrariness in party power, the party's role being to lead, not to command or manage a command economy, (e) the necessity for a plurality of property relations over against state monopoly of productive property; (f) necessary role of the market mechanism even in a socialist system of production and distribution, (g) the centrality of human creativity which can flourish only in an atmosphere of freedom, democracy and participation and (h) a humanist attitude towards religion, seeing religious people not as enemies but as human beings with whom secular people can cooperate for the good of humanity.

The reading of these eight fundamental changes in the forms and norms of socialism as the end of socialism or as the end of history can be judged only by history itself.

# The Monothelite Controversy

## A Historical Survey (Paul Verheul)

### 1. Monothelism - a definition of the term

Like monophysism, monothelism is a word which can lead to misunderstandings.

Monos in Greek means alone, solitary, only, which is to be distinguished from μία, the feminine form of εἰς which means one. μία φύσις would mean one nature, whereas μονή φύσις would mean one nature only, and there is a great difference. None of the so-called Monophysite churches hold that there is only one nature in Christ. Their view is that two natures have, by union, become one.

We have the same problem in dealing with the word monothelite which comes from μονος = only (new) and θέλημα = will. ~~except to the~~ The ancient Oriental Orthodox churches have not been directly involved in the Monothelite Controversy, <sup>except tangentially</sup> yet it needs to be made clear that no one in the controversy seems to have argued for το μονον θελημα χριστου. The argument was between hen thelōma (μία θελήσις) and duo thelēmata.

Monothelism is a political term created either to reconcile two opposing factions or used to condemn a doctrine which was

regarded as heretical; but ~~the~~ <sup>the term often</sup> ~~one which~~ mis-represents what the alleged heresy really stated

The heresy existed primarily in the Chalcedonian Church, where the debate around it lasted for sixty years before it was officially resolved by the Church in Council, and took several forms during the controversy.

Our concern in this paper is to trace the way in which the relation between the divine and <sup>the</sup> human wills in Christ, was understood in the course of this controversy.

## 2. Monenergism, the precursor of Monothelism.

<sup>Chalcedonian</sup> ~~Chalcedonian~~ Patriarch of Alexandria presented the non-Chalcedonian bishops of Egypt with the formula on 3rd June 633, which held that ~~believed in~~ affirmed "The same one Christ and Son operating <sup>these things that</sup> ~~what~~ are proper to God and those that are proper to man by one theandric energy"

( τὸν αὐτὸν ἕνα Χριστὸν καὶ Ὑιὸν  
ἐνεργοῦντα τὰ Θεοπρεπῆ καὶ  
ἀνθρώπινα μιᾷ Θεανδρικῇ ἐνεργείᾳ  
Mansi, tom XI ed 565 D)

This formula had been "discovered" in conferences organized <sup>(beginning 624)</sup> by Emperor Heraclius (575-641) who was a native of Cappadocia, ~~and~~ <sup>(he</sup> founded a new dynasty), whose policy was one of reconciliation of the non-Chalcedonian element in the <sup>Byzantine</sup> Empire, especially in view of external threats to the security of the Empire. The formula was supposed to have



the approval of the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian factions. <sup>Heracius</sup> ~~he~~ had earned great popularity <sup>on both sides</sup> ~~in the Empire~~ by bringing back <sup>to Soloth</sup> ~~the~~ on ~~crossing~~ 21st March 629, the Cross of Christ which had been removed from Jerusalem by the Persians in 614.

The crucial phrase which both sides accepted was μία ἐν ἐργεία. Sergius, Patriarch of Constantinople, <sup>had</sup> formed the phrase in St. Cyril, and therefore approved it. Its success with the Coptic Christians of Egypt was regarded as a sign of its truth. But Sophronius the Monk (who became Patriarch of Jerusalem the next year) <sup>in the face of this Monks</sup> ~~openly~~ <sup>initially</sup> opposed the formula. <sup>Sergius</sup> ~~he~~ <sup>one</sup> ~~repealed~~ <sup>repealed</sup> his approval of the single energy formula, in a letter to Pope Honorius in 634 <sup>the Pope's</sup> referring the ~~question~~ <sup>of</sup> formula to ~~his~~ <sup>the Pope's</sup> judgment, while still suggesting that the formula did safeguard the unity of the Person of Christ and the existence of the two natures in him.

The two letters of Pope Honorius in reply, both in 634, proscribed the use of either one energy or two energies; one could only say, according to the Pope, that Jesus Christ the God-man worked both by his divinity and his humanity; all divine and human activities came from the same indivisible God the Word — in the words of Sergius of Constantinople.

4  
"ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐνεργεῖν καὶ  
ὁμολογεῖν τὰ τε Θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων  
καὶ πᾶσαν, Θεοπρεπῆ καὶ ἀνθρωποπρεπῆ  
ἐνέργειαν ἐξ ἑνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ  
Θεοῦ λόγου ἀδιαιρέτως προϊέναι"

(Letter of Sergius to Honorius. Mansi XI:  
Col 533D)

But in the course of Honorius' long reply to Sergius, he created the monothelite formula. He wanted to establish that the rebellious will of the Old Adam with all its concupiscence did not operate in Jesus Christ, but a single will:

~~xxx~~ unde et unam voluntatem

~~xxx~~ fatemur Domini nostri Jesu Christi  
~~2. Honorius XXX: Col 470~~  
~~omits the text of the first letter~~ (Mansi XI: Col 539 C)  
~~St. Migne P.L. LXXX: 472~~

What the Pope probably wanted to say was that the human will of Jesus was not divided ~~like~~ as St Paul admitted his own to be. <sup>xx</sup> It seems clear also that Honorius was genuinely afraid

x Note. Unde The full sentence reads: Unde et unam voluntatem fatemur Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, quia profecto a divinitate assumpta est nostra natura, "non culpa", illa profecto quae ante peccatum creata est, non quae post praeviationem vitata. Here it seems that he is speaking of the perfect submission of Christ's will to the will of God, and Honorius quotes both John 6:38 (I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the

PTC

will of him who sent me) and the Gethsemane  
("not what I will, but what Thou wilt" - Mk  
He, however, goes on to say: et alia hujus  
non sunt haec diversae voluntatis, sed dispen  
sationis assumptae .

that the two ~~will~~<sup>energies</sup> hypothesis would lead back to Nestorianism. We should not say one energy or operation, <sup>not only because this would lead back to Eutychianism, but also</sup> because the Scripture says it is the same God who works different operations by the same Spirit (1 Cor 12:6 explicitly says there are varieties of energēmata). We should ~~not~~ say ~~two energies~~ ~~either~~ abandon the vocabulary of energies:

hortantes vos ut unus vel geminae novae  
vocis inductum operationis vocabulum  
aufugientes, unum nobiscum Dominum  
Iesum Christum Filium Dei veri,  
Deum verissimum, in duabus naturis  
operatum divinitus atque humanis,  
fide orthodoxa et unitate catholica praedicatis

( PL Lxxx: 474 )

For ~~is~~ the human and the divine operations are  
inseparable. So the Pope concluded his letter to Sergio.  
And so monenergism ends and monothelism  
begins.

### Cyrus of Alexandria and the Formula of Union (633)

Cyrus of Phasis became <sup>Chalcedonian Archbishop</sup> Patriarch of Alexandria  
in 630. ~~by~~ He was able to bring about a union  
between Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians in  
Egypt by a formula of union. The full Greek text  
of this is found in A. Hahn & G. L. Hahn, Bibliothek  
der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der Alten

Kirche, Hildesheim, 1962. pp. 338-<sup>339</sup>~~339~~<sup>x</sup>. The formula  
is in the form of nine anathemas. The <sup>fourth</sup>~~sixth~~ and  
the seventh are the most important for our purposes:

IV. If anyone does not confess

ἐξ αὐτῆς ἀκρας ἐνώσεως τὸν Θεὸν  
λόγον ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ τῆς ἁγίας  
Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου μαρίας ὑποστῆς  
ἐαυτῷ καθ' ἐνωσιν σάρκα ἐξ αὐτῆς  
τῆς ἁγίας Θεοτόκου τὴν ἡμῖν ὁμοούσιον  
ἐψυχωμένην ψυχῇ λογικῇ τε καὶ  
νοερᾷ, ἐνώσει φυσικῇ τε καὶ καθ'  
ὑπόστασιν, καὶ οὕτως προσελθεῖν  
ἐξ αὐτῆς ἓνα ὄντα ἀσύγχυτον τε  
καὶ ἀδιαίρετον, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

VI. If anyone does not confess the one Christ,  
the one Son, to be of two natures (ἐκ δύο  
φύσεων) that is, divinity and humanity,  
the one nature of God the Logos made flesh  
(μίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου φύσιν

σεσαρκωμένην)<sup>xx</sup> according to the Holy Cyril,  
unmixed, unchanged, <sup>not become something else,</sup> unchangeable (ἀσυγχύτως,  
ἀτρέπτως, ἀναλλοιύτως), that is, one united

②<sup>x</sup> also found in Mansi Tom XI, p. 564 ff & Harduin  
Tom III p 1339 ff.

③<sup>xx</sup> note that this is different from Cyril's μία φύσις  
τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγου σεσαρκωμένη - the difference  
is <sup>not just</sup> in the order of words, but in meaning!

hypostasis ( ~~ἡ~~ <sup>ἡ</sup> ~~μία~~ <sup>μία</sup> ὑπόστασις συνθετοῦ, who is the same, our Lord Jesus Christ, one of the Holy Trinitarian Triad, let him be anathema.

If anyone, saying that our one Lord Jesus Christ is to be thought ~~in~~ in two natures (ἐν δυοῖ θεωρείσθαι λέγων ταῖς φύσεσιν) does not also confess him as one of the Holy Triad, God the Word eternally begotten, the Father <sup>who</sup> ~~is~~ in the last <sup>times</sup> ~~days~~ of the age was made flesh and was born of our all-holy and ~~spot~~ immaculate lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary; but (says) he is this and another and not one and the same, as the most wise Cyril affirmed, perfect in deity and the same perfect in humanity and accords to this only thought of us in two natures; the same suffering and ~~not suffering~~ impassible (τὸν αὐτὸν πάσχοντα καὶ ἀπαθῆ) according to the one or the other (nature) as the same holy Cyril affirmed, on the one hand suffering humanly in the flesh as man, remaining as impassible God in the sufferings of his own flesh; and the same one Christ and Son energizing those things proper to God and those proper to man by the same theandric energy according <sup>to</sup> ~~as~~ the Holy Dionysius; distinguishing only in

thought those things from which the union took place,  
and regarding these in the mind as remaining,  
unchanged and unmixed (~~α~~ ἀτρέπτα καὶ ἀσύχυτα) ~~according to their natures~~  
in their union of nature and hypostasis; and  
and acknowledging in these without division or  
separation (ἀδιαίρετως καὶ ἀχωρίστως)  
one and the same Christ and Son, as he  
regards in his mind the two as brought together  
without commixture, making the thinking of them  
in the mind a practical thing (τῷ νῷ  
πραγματικῇν αὐτῶν τὴν θεωρίαν  
ποιούμενος) but not by a false fantasy  
and empty mental combinations; but in no  
way separating them since now the division  
into two has been destroyed on account of  
the union beyond description and understanding;  
saying with the Holy Athanasius: "for there is  
~~one~~ <sup>now</sup> flesh and again the flesh of God the Logos,  
now the flesh en-souled and rational  
(σὰρξ ἐμψυχὸς λογικὴ) and again the  
en-souled and rational flesh of God's ~~word~~ Logos  
but if he should under such expressions understand  
a distinction into parts, let him be anathema.  
(Eng. Tr. adapted from ~~A~~ J.C. Ayer, A. Source B)

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for Ancient Church History, <sup>Scribner's,</sup> New York, (1952) pp. 661-662.

The Sixth Council of Constantinople (680) was to condemn this. But in 633, it was very effective in bridging the chasm between Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians in Egypt. ~~But~~ <sup>however,</sup> Cyrus did not speak of one will - he spoke only of one <sup>monarchic</sup> energy. <sup>would</sup> Honorius generally have followed the line of Cyrus, <sup>but for his fear of Eutychianism and Nestorianism.</sup> Sophronius of Jerusalem and Maximos the Confessor were its most violent opponents.

The Ecthesis of Emperor Heraclius (638)  
and the Typus of Emperor Constant (648)

~~This was~~ the beginning of monotheletism proper was a political compromise offered by Emperor Heraclius in 638. It proposed for the first time the formula  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$ . This imperial decree forbade both the <sup>debated</sup> formulae - one energy or two energies. But it proposed <sup>the</sup> one will of our Lord Jesus Christ, ~~for~~ true God, for "at no time did his flesh animated by a reasonable



# THE MYSTERY OF HISTORY 1

(Principal Miller Endowment Lectures, 1989)

Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios

May I first express my gratitude for the privilege extended to me by the University of Madras, to deliver this year the two Principal Miller Endowment Lectures on "The Meaning of History". The recurring theme of these lectures every year is the same: "The inner meaning of history as disclosing the one increasing purpose that runs through the ages". A very sombre impressive-sounding theme indeed, though its meaning may need more unfolding than most people can do on their own.

First let me pay my humble tribute to Principal William Miller. I never had the privilege of knowing him in person when he was at Madras Christian College.

Miller was more than a great European teacher and an outstanding western Christian missionary. He was also a great humanist philosopher, though that philosophy was moulded by a particular type of Christian dogma current in his time in the west. Whoever <sup>formulated</sup> ~~drafted~~ the terms of the Miller Endowment Lectures knew that central to Principal Miller's Christian convictions was the belief that God was at work in human history; that the purpose of God which is the true meaning of history was gradually unfolding itself in history. We shall <sup>not be able to</sup> trace the origins of this conviction in these lectures. Here I want only to pay tribute to Principal Miller, who came to India because he wanted to be part of that purpose of God as it works out in India.

I would like also to make four introductory points about the concept of history as we have inherited it from our own heritage as well as <sup>from</sup> the western tradition which too is now part of our heritage, though still not fully digested.

## Is the West more historically Oriented than Asia?

Wittgenstein claimed that philosophy does not give us beliefs, but merely relieves feelings of intellectual discomfort. I must enter <sup>the</sup> ~~an~~ caveat that much of western philosophy serves that function - that of an intellectual anodyne or painkiller. In my understanding philosophy's function is the opposite - namely to create intellectual discomfort that prods the human spirit to rise above the intellectual towards the truly healing joy.

'History', like 'culture', is a concept we have recently borrowed from the west. Philosophically its original provenance is the German-speaking world rather than the English-speaking world. There is no real parallel to 'history' or 'geschichte' in Sanskrit. We have our puranas, our caritas and our itihasas, but no real concept of 'history' as an entity. Small wonder then that Al-Beruni, the Arab traveller, wrote in 1039 A.D., about our ancestors of nearly a millennium ago:

"The Indians unfortunately do not pay much attention to the historical sequence of events; they are very negligent in the enumeration of the chronological succession of their kings, and when we press them for explanation they do not know what to say and are ever ready to relate fables".<sup>1</sup>

We need not take that castigation too literally. We do have a few exact dates on several inscriptions and quite a compendious historical literature in Sanskrit, in Pali and in Prakrit. Just to give a few examples, the Vinaya basket of the Buddhist Tripitaka, contains (a) the Mahavagga which opens with a biography of the Buddha as the basis for the code of duties outlined therein, and (b) the Cullavagga, with the history of the Councils convoked after the demise of the Buddha. We need not take the 547 Jātakas or narrative tales of anterior existences of the Buddha as historical material. Even the hagiographies or apadāna of Buddhist men and women saints need not be so classified, though they have some historical basis, no doubt. But the description of the councils, the first, of 500 monks at Rajagriha, convoked soon after the Buddha's demise by his principal disciple Kashyapa, and the second council at Vaishali a century later, as well as the third at Pataliputra in the time of Ashoka contain valuable historical material, though most of it seems difficult to separate from legend.

These were mentioned as examples to show that Asians are not totally devoid of any sense of history. The Pali or Magadhi Theravada canon, the Nepalese, Tibetan, Chinese and Korean Buddhist canons of Asia do contain historical material, though again it is most difficult to separate the legendary from the historical.

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1 cited by J.K. Nariman, Literary History of Sanskrit Buddhism, Motilal Banarsidass, 2nd edition Bombay 1923, Reprint Delhi 1972. p. 160

But unlike the Greek tradition which seems to have preserved verbatim fragments of the dicta of the pre-Socratics, we have no such fragments from the Buddha or Mahavira. The Tripitaka and Asvaghosha's Buddhacharita or Sutrāṅkārā as well as the Vedas, Upanishads, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana have all come down to us in heavily edited versions or translations. The only real early fragments we have are the edicts of Ashoka, and some clay tablets and inscriptions in Mongolian, Chinese, Syriac, Pahlavi, and other Central Asian languages. But then besides the Greek fragments, how much historical material can the Europeans show us from the early centuries of our era or from the one before?

Compared to Europe, in terms of the situation 2000 years ago, Asian cultures had much greater abundance of historical material. There is no justification for the view many hold that Asians were traditionally ahistorical while the Europeans were more historically oriented. This is especially noticeable in the case of China, where very precisely dated chronicles were maintained. The documents and records of many Asian-African civilisations do go back to at least the second millennium B C E (China, India, Egypt and others).

The word 'history' is of course from Greek 'historia', which originally meant narratives, accounts, enquiries; it was probably a common word, plural in number, not singular. Herodotus (484 BCE - 430 BCE) used it as the title of his book, visible when the papyrus scroll was rolled up: HERODOTUS OF HALICARNASSOS - HISTORIA. A. R. Burns, in his introduction to the Penguin Classics translation of Herodotus, says that the word "history" in our present sense, was born with that title.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Essential Mystery of History

Aware of a few notable exceptions, one can still make the general observation that in ancient history, whether in Asia or Africa or in the west, people's historical consciousness was always deeply rooted in the Transcendent. History was never fully separable from myth - specially religious myth - the Prajāpati or Brahmāṇḍa myths in Hinduism, the Tirthāṅkara myth in Jainism, the Buddhakayas in Buddhism, the Creation myth in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and so on.

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2: Herodotus, The Histories, Penguin Classics, Revised edition 1972.

These early European historians like Herodotus and Plutarch were by no means secular rationalists like many modern historians. They were 'religious' and believed in sacrifices and oracles and all the rest. But their transcendent world of the gods was itself so full of strife, envy, greed and lust, that the rootedness of their histories in the transcendent helped very little to ennoble them.

The question of the meaning of history' has to do not only with the rootedness of history in the transcendent realm, but also with the human perception of the character and orientation of that transcendent realm.

We shall deal with this question at some length in the second lecture. Here one needs only to say that if history is regarded only as an 'objective realm' to be explored in a value-neutral way by critical reason, then it can yield no rich meaning. Then history becomes meaningless "bunk" as Ranke thought. Or as a great western historian of our time, H.A.L. Fisher puts it with more grace: <sup>6</sup>

"One intellectual excitement has, however been denied me. Men wiser and more learned than I have discerned in history a plot, a rhythm, a pre-determined pattern. These harmonies are concealed from me. I can see only one emergency following upon another as wave follows upon wave, only one great fact with respect to which, since it is unique, there can be no generalisations: only one safe rule for the historian: that he should recognize in the development of human destinies the play of the contingent and the unforeseen".

If history is seen only from a secular rational critical viewpoint it yields no meaning; all is pure chance and happenstance. On the other hand if history is seen as one dimension of a multi-dimensional universe, and if we have access to some perspective on these other dimensions, then history begins to unfold itself into a slightly discernible pattern. Not that we get a clear picture; but we do get a picture that provides enough of a clue to throw oneself <sup>into that history and to identify oneself</sup> with that discerned pattern and purpose.

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6. H.A.L. Fisher, History of Europe, 2 vols, Fontana 1960, p.773 .

This is why I insist that there is an essential element of mystery in history. But mystery does not mean a closed, inaccessible realm, hidden away. Neither does it mean, as it does to many moderns, a puzzle, a 'whodunit', which can be solved by ingenious detective investigation.

To me, as an Eastern Christian, mystery means something more sacramental, though not sacramental in the usual western sense. To me mystery means rising above the dimension open to our senses, into participation in a transcendent community where communion with the Transcendent is experienced historically through the liturgical action of the Transcendent in the community, by word and deed, by sign and symbol, by body and soul as well as by mind and spirit. I do believe that the historical consciousness belongs integrally to this liturgical community. Devoid of this element of mystery, history is simply one thing after the other, a jumble of chaos and confusion; a series of wars and conquests, of migration and transmigration, samsāra without sāra.

### 3 Myth, Meaning and The Brevity of History

My third preliminary point about the comparative brevity of history in relation to time as a whole shall be very briefly dealt with indeed.

Human history as we know it or can reconstruct from written records does not go far beyond 5000 years. The scientists tell me that they know that the Big Bang which began our universe occurred about 17 billion years ago. That is the kind of science that I treat with respect not unmixed with skepticism. 17,000 million years of astrohistory, we know only 5000 years of it as written history - . i.e. about one by 3.4 millionth of the whole of time. I know there are astrophysicists who will tell me that they know everything that happened in that 17 billion years of time, except the first tenth of a second.

But the written historical record does not deal with 16.999995 billion out of the 17 billion. They tell me that physical evolution took at least 12.5 billion years before the protogalaxies, galaxies, star clusters, stars and solar systems with their planets, including our own little planet took shape. Then began chemical evolution for 1.5 billion years, before life began 3 billion years ago. Life has been evolving now for 3 billion years; before that there was only physico-chemical evolution, governed by the principles which we can now see in the evolution of auto-replicating systems - dialectical principles like stabilization-destabilization and co-operation-competition. As organic evolution

begins we see now principles of self-replicating systems begin to emerge - like mutation, selection and recombination - which were not obviously evident at the physico-chemical level. And as we come to later socio-cultural or historico-linguistic human evolution, still new principles of self-replicating systems emerge - more accurate copying mechanisms, more efficient communication systems, recombination mechanisms, programmed feed-back mechanisms, nervous systems and so on.

None of our written history would have been possible without all the preceding developments, stochastic processes and emergent principles. All of that history including life and consciousness and the principles which guide them must have been potentially present in that first Big Bang. That involves a lot of explaining which neither history nor science can easily escape.

Various cultures have designed or developed varying devices to explain pre-history. They deal with it briefly, though the period involved is many million times longer. Epics and Sagas deal with a much later part of prehistory. The hoary beginnings had to be expressed in myth and symbol, community rituals and liturgical feasts.

History is integral not only to the transcendent dimensions of reality, but also to pre-history and the ways in which we apprehend and articulate and enter into relationship with that prehistory. Our secular rationality has created the myths of Big Bang and Natural Evolution. All theories, like all myths, are human creations. The Theory of Evolution is ~~one such theory-myth~~ created by a sector of humanity to understand that pre-history.

Myths are simply inescapable. Today's myths ~~may tomorrow~~ be laughed at. But as long as they are accepted myths they direct our historical understanding. As the Italian Raffaele Petazzoni puts it:

"Myth is not fable, but history; 'true history' and <sup>not</sup> 'false history'. It is true history by virtue of its content, the narrative of events that really occurred, beginning<sup>1</sup> with those grandiose events of the origins; the origin<sup>2</sup> of the word, of humanity, the origin of life and death, of the animal and vegetable species, the origin of hunt and of agriculture, the origin of fire, and so on; events remote in time from which present-day life took its beginning and foundation, from which the present structure of society issued and on which it still depends".<sup>7</sup>

Myth is a device for dealing with important events in pre-history that affect our lives today. Myth is meaning-filled time, perhaps the meaning is evident only to poets and neurotics like me. Primordial time, despite its unmanageable length, has to be incorporated into history in some form of myth, if history is to promote genuine self-understanding for peoples. Our secular histories consciously seek to avoid myths, but unconsciously load us with new myths about evolution and progress, about money and greed, about power and adventure - with disastrous consequences some times.

#### 4. Cyclical and Linear Views of Time

Western scholars have often told us that our ancient world views are 'cyclical', while theirs is 'linear'. It will be useful to look at the origins of this peculiar geometry whose origins go back to debates and polemics between Neo-Platonism and Augustine.

The Neoplatonists emphasized the cycle, the immanence of eternity in history, the eternal return, the endless circular metempsychoses of samsāra, the cycles of joy and sorrow, of dharma and adharma, of justice and injustice, of misery and bliss. In the City of God, Augustine attacked this cyclical view of history in order to free eternity from the embrace of time. What Augustine did in Book XII of the City of God was to bring in the idea of linear progress, arguing that since in each re-incarnation there must be some novum which was not present in the previous incarnation, the cycles are not identical. This idea of a series of new nova which constantly develop gave the basis later for the liberal notion of progress and to the Darwinian Theory of Evolution.

Prima facie, it looks all right. Herodotus the first important pagan historian of the west was too cyclical in his view of history. The first great Christian theologian of the west broke the spell of the circle as prison, delivering us from the confining circuitus of time, to be free to progress on the linear via recta of time -<sup>8</sup> of course not ordinary tempus, but tempora Christiana Christian time, Christian line. And Augustine charted the path of history: away from the dying city of the earth and its dying cyclical time, towards the City of God, along the path of linear progress. Eternity is in the future. So the path of history has to be linear!

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7. Raffaele Petazzoni, Miti e leggende, Twin, 1948, Vol I. p.v. Eng Tr. in G. Van der Leeuw: "Primordial Time and Final Time" in Joseph Campbell, (ed) Man and Time, Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks Bollingen series XXX.3 Princeton U.P., 1983, pp. 330-331

8 On this see Gilles Quispel: "Time and History in Patristic Christianity" in Joseph Campbell, ed., op cit. pp 96 ff -

Nothing could be more misleading than Augustine at this as at many other points. Eternity was never a prisoner of time. Time is where eternity presents itself. Augustine's **denial of the value of time accounts partly** for the western history. I cannot demonstrate that here.

We need not doubt that the pagan Greek view of time was cyclical or circular. Aristotle says so, in his Physics 4:14, referring possibly to Empedocles and Plato before him:

" Even time itself is thought of as a circle. And this opinion is held because time is the measure of a circular motion, and is itself measured by a circular motion "

For Aristotle, the reason is that time is both generated by the motion of the planets, and measured by that motion, which is circular. Without accepting Aristotle's <sup>view</sup> we can ourselves see the circularity of time in so many rhythmic recurrences. The galaxies, the stars, the planets are all in circular motion. In our experience morning comes around every day, as does nightfall. Monday-Tuesday-till Sunday, the cycle of the week recurs again and again. The moon waxes and wanes. The months come back in 12 month cycles. The year begins and ends to begin again. And all you can have is an unending repetition of year after year. Circularity thus means endless recurrence.

The late Neoplatonist Proclus clearly denied linear time, a line straight and infinite in both directions.<sup>9</sup> Of course since Augustine's time is in the mind<sup>10</sup> (psychological time) and since he does not accept time as made by the ~~motion~~ <sup>motion</sup> of planets, he could see time as linear.

I think the controversy about linear versus cyclical time is quite pointless. Neither the line nor the circle can do justice to the concept of time. St. Basil showed us how the idea of linear time as an infinite succession of points in a universe which has a beginning raises unanswerable questions about what preceded the first moment of beginning.<sup>11</sup>

Western thought often forgets the fact that time itself cannot be understood in our logical categories. Kurt Goedel, the famous author of Goedel's Theorem, sought to prove by mathematical logic that time has to be circular, but the argument has not carried conviction.<sup>11</sup> Such questions do not yield to

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9. See Diels' Fragments Proclus: in Tim 3: 29, 3-5 et passim.

See Plato's Timaens: 38 A

10. See his Confessions: XI: 20 ff.



mathematical logic. We in India traditionally have dealt with such logically unanswerable questions with myth and symbol.

On the one hand we have the myth of the yugās, the mahayugās and the pralayavilaya which takes place between mahayugās. 4 yugas make a mahāvuga i.e. 12,000 years of 360 years each, or 4,320,000 of our years. A thousand such mahayugās (4.32 billion years) constitute a Kalpa, and 14 kalpas, i.e. 60.48 billion years make up a manvantāra. And that 60.48 billion years constitute a day, and another 60.48 billion a night. in the life of Brahma.<sup>12</sup> We have in India such mind-stretching notions of time, whose purpose is not to remove the discomfort of intellectual curiosity, but to shake us out of the kind of narrow-minded, linear, supposedly rational and understandable definitions of historical time such as western civilisation seeks to offer us. The purpose of the myth is to shatter the spell of profane, linear historical time which imprisons us.

The "wheel of time", which westerners call the "cyclical view of time" is not meant to be a descriptive concept, as it is in Aristotle. Its purpose is to wake us up out of our trivial historical pursuit, and out of our childish pre-occupation with the understandable, and the comprehensible, which mean also manipulable by us. Where was Madras University a yuga ago, and where will it be a yuga hence? Or ask the same question about where would your professorship, your home, your car, your bank balance be, a kalpa hence? Ask that question seriously, and one is ready to begin to ask questions about the Meaning of History.

The famous 17 billion years of evolution time as computed in the west, is also a myth - a very inferior one, in my opinion. On our Indian scale it is about 4 kalpas, or less than one-third of a manvantāra. Should we not be careful about yielding to such smallness?

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11. Kurt Goedel. "A Remark about the Relationship between Relativity Theory and Idealistic Philosophy" in P.A. Schilpp (ed) Albert Einstein, Philosopher-Scientist, New York, 1951, pp 555-562

12. See Mircea Eliada, 'Time and Eternity in Indian Thought' in Campbell(ed) Man and Time. op.cit. pp 173-200.

## 1. The Western Notion of History - Hegel

Few people realise that the prevailing notion of history which we so readily accept is hardly two hundred years old. It owes much to Kant and Hegel in the 18th and 19th centuries, but did not come from them directly.

Hegel died in 1831 - in the 50th anniversary year of the publication of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. We can give credit to Hegel for having attempted to put forward a major philosophy of history, one, however, which has not stood the test of time. But he also put forward - perhaps for the first time - a history of philosophy. The two are closely interconnected - Hegel's history of philosophy and his philosophy of history. Actually his history of philosophy is an aspect of his philosophy of history as expressed in the Phenomenology of the Spirit.

History for Hegel is the unfolding of the potentialities of the Absolute Idea, in the knowing subject and in the known object (the world). The Absolute Idea is the Divine, but not a transcendent Divine who stands apart from history; the Divine discloses itself through history, not standing behind the historical process, but is the totality of the Process itself. History is God, fully immanent.

If you want to put Hegel's philosophy in Indian terms: Jiva is Brahma; the world (Jagat) is also Brahma. But the realisation of the Brahman-identity of the Jiva is not to be realised apart from the world or by renouncing it. The Jiva and the Jagat together constitute Brahma in its unfolding self-manifestation, which is history.

Again, using our Sāṃkhya as a starting point, Hegel would have said: Purusa is Geist; Prakṛti is Natur. But the two are not really two. Both are manifestations or self-revelations of Brahman as history. Brahman is Purusa in Prakṛti, Geist in Natur, Spirit or Mind or Consciousness in the world:

"Der Mensch, das endliche Bewusstsein, ist der Geist in der Bestimmung der Endlichkeit". (The human being, the finite form of consciousness, is in fact the Spirit under the conditions of finitude) <sup>1</sup>

This term Geist or Spirit is central to Hegel. It means consciousness, both as Absolute Idea and as human thought. Mind, or Spirit, or Geist is "the most concrete, most developed form achieved by the Idea in its self-actualisation. Even finite or subjective mind, not only Absolute Mind,

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1. Hermann Glockner (ed) Hegel-Lexikon, Zweite verbesserte auflage, Fr. Frommann Verlag Günther Holzborg - Stuttgart, 1957.

must be grasped as an actualisation of the Idea".<sup>2</sup>

"Mind is, therefore, in its every act only apprehending itself, and the aim of all genuine science is just this, that mind shall recognize itself in everything in heaven and earth".<sup>3</sup>

The activities of the Mind include art, religion and philosophy as well as science. We do great injustice to Hegel in writing him off as an idealist. Hegel can be understood only in his historical context, his sittlichkeit in human historical development.

The child Hegel lived and grew up in a divided Germany of the end of the 18th century. He was born in August 1770, and his Phenomenology of the Spirit is the work of a youth, published when he was 37 (in 1807), but written earlier, during his Jena period (1801-1807).

Like our own time, Hegel's youth was spent in the turmoil of a turbulent Europe, in the wake of the French Revolution (1789). He grew up in a time of great German creativity - Goethe, Schiller, Hoelderlin, Haman and Herder, all reacting against the sweeping social changes of late 18th century German society, ~~sadly~~ divided into so many small princedoms and city-states.<sup>x</sup> Like in our own time in the world, Germany was moaning the loss of harmony of personal experience, the disintegration of social relations, and was hankering after a new Humanitaet with personal serenity and social harmony.

Like in our own time, people in Germany were then blaming the new industrial civilisation, the rampant commercialism of the new bourgeois civilisation, political fragmentation leading to economic stagnation and inability to compete with France or Britain or even tiny Holland, religious ~~devi-~~sions leading to sectarian strife and social disunity.

Hegel blamed Kant for making the great divides between mind, will, and heart; the whole human being no longer existed. One acted here on pure reason, there on practical reason, and made judgements based on a yet different set of laws. Making money, of course, needed little mind and even less heart.

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2. Hegel, Phenomenology of the Spirit, § 377, Tr.J.B. Bailhi, New York, Harper & Row, 1967. See Miller and Findlay, Philosophy of Mind Oxford, 1970 p.1

3. ibid

4. 94 princes, 103 counts, 40 ruling bishops, 51 free towns - altogether 288, separate, mostly miniscule political entities, with Prussia the only large political unit.

The new science, too, was fragmenting and divisive. Hegel's understanding of mind and nature was proposed as an alternative to the deadening dualist mechanical paradigm of Newtonian physics, a reaction against the Cartesian separation of res cogitans and res extensa, and against Kant's threefold separation of mind, will and feeling.

Hegel wanted to provide a larger paradigm or framework, not only for art, religion and philosophy, but also for science and history - a series of Begriffsbestimmungen which follow logically from a single dialectic of the history of the Absolute manifesting itself in history.

He blamed religion and culture also for being divisive. In fact for the young Hegel religion played a major role in bringing about the breakdown of society - theologians quarrelling about dogmas, but making institutional religion a base for power; a Church separated from society and yet trying to run their "Christian police institutions" to control society and punish deviants; a Martin Luther who wanted to liberate the clergy from the Church and yet also wanting to control their minds and their thoughts; promoting theological prejudices about the innate corruption of human nature; and so on.

But Hegel was not really anti-religious. In fact he wanted a new religion that would transform the masses into dignified human beings. But for that one has to go beyond the aesthetic and the religious, to a philosophy that includes and absorbs and transcends both. Hegel's philosophy of history is thus offered as the more dialectically developed "true religion".

It may be useful at this point to draw some lines of comparison and contrast between Hegel and Sankara.

In the first chapter of the Brahmasutra-Phashya we see Sankara saying:

"One and the same self is hidden in all things moving or immovable. The Self reveals itself, without itself changing in a graduated series of beings" (1:1:11)

He accepts what is said:

Sāṃastasya jagato janmadikāraṇaḥ brahmotyuktam, tasya  
sāṃastajagatkāraṇasya brahmanō vyāpītvam nityatvam sarvajñaṭva  
sāvātmamityēvaṃ jātīyaka dharma ukta ēva bhavanti (1:2:1)

The only obvious difference is that for Sankara, though Brahman is the cause of the time-flow as well as its true being, Brahman is unchanged by indwelling the changing world of history.

For Hegel that which unfolds itself in history is the Absolute itself, turning its potentiality into actuality and thereby becoming aware of itself. History is the being of the Absolute for Hegel. For Sankara, Brahman simply projects his power of māyā on the avyakta or unmanifest, and the manifest world of history emerges with its names and forms (I:4:3)

Just as Hegel was seeking to overcome the dualism of consciousness and the world by positing the Absolute as the true being of both, Sankara, in seeking to overcome the purusa-prakṛti dualism, posits the Brahman as the true being of both.

Hegel's experienter-experienced dualism does not bother Sankara. The Indian simply posits ananyatva or non-difference between the two. The German goes quite another way. He does not say that the subject and the object are not different from each other. He simply says that the anyatva of the object can be overcome in thought by realising that it is the same Absolute that operates in subject and object as aspects of its progressive unfolding in history; the anyatva is simply the thesis-antithesis dialectical relation, which is always overcome at a higher level of intuition, in history itself, achieved by proper thought-work or Denkarbeit. This is normal, since, for Hegel, to be human is to be a thinker. Marx redefined Man as worker rather than thinker, thinking being only part of working.

For Sankara it is not thought that finally overcomes the duality, but a higher kind of jñāna or brahmajñāna. Thought and reason for Sankara, remain under the spell of māyā, for the dualism of thinker-thought is intrinsic to thought. Thought remains in the realm of avidyā and māyā. Mokṣa or realisation burns away the power of māyā, constituted by avidyā, and releases the jīva from the cycle of births and re-births, from the cycle of samsāra, from the cycle of history.

The differences between Sankara and Hegel are quite fundamental. We note this in passing. We also note that while the philosophy of history was largely rejected, his basic framework continues to be operative, with some modifications, in prevailing systems like Process Philosophy and Teilhard de Chardin.

## 2. The Non-Mystery of History - Vico, Marx and Dilthey

Hegel's method was speculative, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, picking up an insight from their bare acquaintance with Indian philosophy,<sup>5</sup> flew high in speculative thought, but soon crashlanded. For the age that was dawning was an age of science, which tolerates no speculation not rooted in empirical evidence. Philosophy in the 19th and 20th centuries could gain credibility in the west only by relating itself to science and method.

But science itself, at least in Germany, had bifurcated by the middle of the 19th century, into the Naturwissenschaften and Geisteswissenschaften, taking a cue from the earlier dichotomy between Natur and Geist. The Historical School in Germany had already noticed what we now know more clearly: the strict empirical sciences presuppose a communication structure of inter-subjectivity which the natural sciences themselves cannot examine with their categories. The physical sciences constitute a limited realm of knowledge, based on a different and scientifically unexamined realm of communicative inter-subjectivity within the scientific community. This latter realm of the human sciences, including history and art; religion and culture, literature, poetry, philosophy and psychology, sociology and literary or art criticism, already begun to accumulate a huge body of knowledge. This knowledge too was science or Wissenschaft. Parallel to the Naturwissenschaften which dealt with Natur, there were the Geisteswissenschaften which dealt with the world of consciousness, the real human world of subjectivity and inter-subjectivity. The Germans have always taken this consciousness world much more seriously than the English speaking world has. The Anglophones have obstinately struggled to bring the human world of subjectivity under some laws of mathematical precision and certainty. The dying philosophical school of Linguistic Analysis (stubbornly refusing to die in India, always the last bastion of Anglophone culture) represents a last ditch stand of that struggle.

Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) born two years after Hegel died was the architect of the structure of the human sciences. He argued that just as there was a world of objects (studied by the physical sciences), there was a world of subjects - a life-world, ..... contd

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5. For details see Wilhem Halbfass, India and Europe - An Essay in Understanding, SUNY Press, Albany, N.Y. 1988

a Lebenswelt, a human world of subjectivity, the world of experienter.

This world cannot be known by the same laws and methods prevailing in the world of objects. The object-world is constituted by the subject-world, and we should study the laws of the latter too, through specialized disciplines.

By thus creating an almost independent structure for the Geisteswissenschaften or Cultural Sciences, Dilthey gave a new validity to 'scientific history',<sup>6</sup> and its new categories of 'Erlieben' (experience), 'einleben' (indwelling) and 'understanding' (Verstehen as opposed to Erklaerung or Explanation).

Causality may be the principle of explanation in the natural sciences which deal with the natural world. But in the Lebenswelt or community life of inter-subjectivity we need to enter into the experience of the experienter, and sort of 'live inside' him/her.

Kant's Critique of Pure Reason has to be supplemented by a new Critique of Historical Reason, and this is indeed what Dilthey attempted. Hegel, for Dilthey, was too speculative and supernaturalist, Dilthey sought a framework for understanding history in purely naturalistic, empirical terms. He wanted to purge Hegel of the mythical element in his philosophy of history-namely the Absolute Idea.

Along with Giambattista Vico in the early 18th century, Dilthey too believed that the historical world is an artefact of human creation. Vico had, already before Hegel, taken the supernatural out of history by making humanity the creator of history. Marx and Dilthey simply went along with this notion that since humanity was history's creator, the same humanity could both understand its own creation and change it.

But in Vico, the idea of divine providence as guiding history had not been totally abandoned. Only he thinks that pronoia or providence acts according to natural laws which human beings can early discover. That is the purpose of Vico's Nuova Scienza - to show that providence has to act only because human beings do not discover the laws of Providence and guide history in accordance with these laws. Once we know the laws and know ourselves as creators of history, we can take over from Providence; but if we keep making mistakes, Providence takes over again, and makes us

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6. See especially Dilthey's later essays on methodology for the Cultural Sciences: "Grundlegung der Geisteswissenschaften" and "Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften", in Vol VII of his Gesammelte Schriften, Gottingen, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1913-1967. The essays are extensively commented upon in Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, Eng. Tr. J.J. Shapiro, Beacon Press, Boston, 1972, esp. ch.7. pp140-160

go through the whole process of creating history all over again - corso and ricorso, course and recourse; so long as human beings fail to do their duty in creating the 'right' kind of history, i.e. in accordance with the laws of Providence, Providence continues to act. Only Hegel tried to read out these laws of Providence as the dialectic of history, meeting Vico's demand. Marx simply went on from where Hegel left it, but Vico's principle that only by making the right kind of history can we really know the correct philosophy of history.

Marx rejects Hegel's reading of the rules of historical law, but, as is well known, took over many aspects from it - the ideas of the dialectic of becoming a human being by the right kind of history making, and the ideas of alienation and disalienation, or Fall and Redemption, Unheil and Heil to use the Christian antecedents of Hegel's idea. The main shift was from Denkarbeit or thought-work to real Arbeit, real work physically handling the material world. Labour is where alienation operates and creates the dialectic by producing its enemy, Capital.

Marx basically accepted the Vico principle, that only by making history you begin to understand the rules that guide history. Marx could not however, accept the Viconian principle that if human beings make the wrong kind of history, providence will intervene. But in place of providence, the best Marx could do was to gently introduce an apotheosis of history itself. It is history that will intervene and rectify the wrong kind of history that human beings sometimes create. History, personified, deified, becomes an agent in creating history, though always through human actions. The place of pronoia or Providence is now taken over by History itself as an agent.

Wilhelm Dilthey who was a lad of 15 when the Communist Manifesto was published, carries out the secularisation of history beyond the point that Marx had taken it, by eliminating the idea of History as an agent. Humanity comes fully into its own as the Creator, Understander and Lord of History, so long as humanity works along the immutable laws of history.

The idea that History is an agent recurs however in many other areas of the intellectual theories of the west - in the Darwinian and Neo-Darwinian theories of Evolution. The species are created, not by humanity, but by Nature itself through the processes of Natural Selection, and Stochastic randomness, by the rules of population genetics and genetic mutation. We note that the agent here is Nature, not History personified. Nature was always an agent in western theory; but in phenomena like cell formation, herd formation and social formation of intelligent species like humans, some of the same basic laws of nature are operative; only at a particular points in Evolution, they become the laws of history. In both nature and history, the teleological element comes to the forefront, despite every attempt on the part of science's principle of mechanical conception of causality to impose a taboo on all teleology. For in both nature and history the telos or goal is always "the successful outcome". Teleology



### 3. New Developments - The Hermeneutic School

Dilthey's attempt to objectify the subjective realm and to produce a Critique of Historical Reason which provides norms for assessing that realm again has not stood the test of time. The biggest attack came from the Hermeneutic School especially in its most recent recension by Hans Georg Gadamer's epochmaking Truth and Method.<sup>7</sup>

Gadamer shows that historical reason is historically conditioned. Each student of history brings his/her own mental formation to the study of history. This effective personal history of the observer, i.e. the accident of his birth in a particular culture, his/her linguistic training, skills in various disciplines - all this gives the observer a particular horizon which colours and shapes what he/she observes within that horizon. There is no subjectivity which has itself not been conditioned by history, the Wirkungsgeschichte or effective personal history of each subject. Each student of history brings his/her prejudices to the study of history. The best we can do is to set some socially agreed criteria for the critical assessment of the various prejudices that have shaped each historical account. When the critic attributes prejudice to a particular historical narrative, the critic must specify the nature of the particular prejudice, objectify it, and see precisely where that prejudice operates. But in order to locate the historian's prejudice, the critic must have a prejudice of his/her own about the nature of the former's prejudice. The latter's prejudice can then be objectified in terms of a prejudice about that prejudice, and critical rationality goes on in an endless circles of prejudices and prejudices about prejudices.

Juergen Habermas would say that even scientific hypotheses in the natural sciences are in fact such prejudices. Statements in all realms of knowledge need validation, and the criteria for validation will vary from realm to realm. In the physical sciences it may be the experiment and its interpretation; in the social sciences it may be documentation and fact assessment; in art or literary criticism it may be intuitions about what constitutes quality; in value choices it may be simply community consensus. All validation criteria have to be socially agreed upon.

Where does all this lead us, in relation to the meaning of history? Clearly western thought offers us very little objective criteria for assessing the meaning of history. The best they can do is to offer us a social consensus, formed after considerable critical reflection, the consensus itself being provisional and subject to further critical reflection about prejudices inherent in it.

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7. Original Wahrheit und Methode, JCB Mohr, Tuebingen, 1960 Eng. Tr. Truth and Method, Sheed & Ward, London, 1975.

From an Asian perspective one can say that the critical-historical method has been impressively effective in dispelling many falsities from the historical record, and to provide it with a more reliable basis.

As for the meaning of history itself the critical method fails to yield many positive results beyond the idea of a critical-provisional consensus on the meaning of history. Such a consensus has not as yet emerged. If there is such an emerging consensus, it is about the unity of humanity, the movement of history towards greater justice and human dignity for all, and the push towards global perspectives. But such a movement is more of a task than a historical fact.

One of the major requirements of such a global perspective is to have global histories which all of us on the globe can call our own. Our present histories are too much oriented towards and influenced by national, ethnic, or regional prejudices. It will take a long time, not only for westerners, but, also for Indians, to accept all history as our history. Indian children are now being taught to regard the whole of Indian history as our history, which we did not so regard before India became united as a nation, though even after India's division many Indians still regard Mohenjo Daro and Harappa as part of our history.

But when we approach the question: "what is the inner meaning of history as disclosing the one increasing purpose that runs through the ages?", we feel rather stumped. The moment we speak of "increasing purpose" (an awkward phrase in any case) we are speaking of some conscious being, for purposes are normally attached to non-conscious beings.

Besides, 'purpose' is a temporal concept, something to be achieved in the future which the purposer does not have in the present. It is difficult to conceive a notion of purpose in a transcendent Being to whom past, present and future are eternally co-present. That is why there is something philosophically faulty in the very terms of the Principal Miller Endowment Lectures. There are three expressions in those terms which gives one pause. What does one mean by "inner" meaning? Is there something called an external or "outer" meaning to history as opposed to "inner" meaning? It seems the term "inner" has a sense very dated in British theology of an earlier generation. They used to distinguish between an "outward" sign of an "inward" grace in their theology of the sacraments. By "inward" or "inner" they meant "spiritual" as opposed to material, it seems. Such expressions are no longer current. They mean very little.

The "increasing purpose" is also an expression difficult for me to understand. Does this mean that the purpose was rather halting and unfervent in the beginning, and becomes more resolute as time goes on?

Western Christian theology has been rather philosophically naive in making claims about God "acting" in history, revealing Himself in history and having a purpose for history. We human beings who are temporal creatures of history can speak about our purpose, our action and so on, but to ascribe such purpose and such action to God is to anthropomorphise Him. This is all right in poetry and devotion, and for the Christian scripture perhaps which is more poetry and devotion than philosophy. A philosophical theology would have to start out with the acknowledgment that such human time-space concepts cannot be, strictly speaking, applied to the one who transcends time and space.

I do not forget the fact that this is what precisely Hegel accused Christian theology of doing - making God so transcendent that he has nothing to do with human history, culture and political-economic action. Unfortunately what modern civilisation is doing seems to me much worse than what a too heavily transcendentalist theology did. Even the New Hermeneutik tries to find meaning in history strictly within the subject-object dualist framework of experiencer and experience, or observer and observed or critic and that which is critically examined. The tragedy of Western historiography is that it has thrown God out in both forms of our perception: as transcendent and as immanent.

Our own nāstika tradition once tried that route; they did not get very far and very few followed them. Here is a whole civilisation, the leading cadres and institutions of all but the most reactionary states are doing the same i.e. the arrogant appropriation of history as a human creation and an object of human study and understanding without any reference to anything beyond humanity and the world. Humanity as Lord of Nature and History is what both the various forms of western liberal thought (including much of current western Christian theology) and the various forms of Marxism (including Marxism-Leninism) which are all now in a process of great upheaval and heart searching, are trying to achieve as the goal and meaning of history - the "increasing purpose" which history itself is supposed to disclose progressively. Marxism and Liberalism both seek to overcome the inherent dualism of such an approach by integrating the two within the original matter-energy of the Big-Bang and the Evolutionary framework of its linear development.

Now we are in a time when there is a growing reluctance to rest on the oars of liberal or Marxist achievement of thought and action. Clearly for me at least, in moving beyond, there seems to be no alternative, but to reintroduce the Transcendent in some way, but not in a purely conceptual way, into our life and worship, if not into our conceptual systems.

## NESTORIANS

Name given to Christians who adhered to the heresy attributed to Nestorius, (ca 451) Archbishop of Constantinople, (428-431) native of Germanicia in Syria Euphratensis as also to members of the Persian Church, called variantly "The Church of the East", the "East Syrian Church", the "Chaldean Syrian Church", the "Nestorian Church" etc., Today the remnants of this once great church are to be seen mainly in Iraq, India and the U. S. A.

Traditional headquarters of the Nestorian Church was Seleucia, 60 miles from Baghdad, now known as Salman Pak. Origins are obscure; traditionally the founding of the Church is attributed to Mar Mari presumed to be one of the 70 disciples of Christ, or at least a disciple of St. Thomas the Apostle Origen. (See Eusebius, H.E. I:III:C.1:1) attributes the evangelisation of Parthia to St. Thomas himself; others would claim the Apostle Thaddeus (Mar Adai) as the founder.

Refugees fleeing persecution in the Roman empire under Emperors Decius (249 AD) and Diocletian (303-304 AD) replenished the rank of the persian Christians.

Mar Baba (Papa), Metropolitan of Seleucia at the end of the 3rd century, organized the Persian Church. The theological school of Nisibis, later transferred to Edessa (363 AD) was the spiritual centre of the Church; St. Ephrem Syrus (Ca 306-373) taught at both Edessa and Nisibis.

Nestorius did not belong to the Persian Church, nor did he obviously know Syriac or Persian. The Persian Church was not party to the Nestorian Controversy, culminating in the condemnation of Nestorius in 431 at Ephesus. The Persian Church had already severed connections with the Byzantine Church, mainly for political reasons, and declared itself an autonomous church, at the Synod of Markabta, presided over by Dadisho, in 424; and hence took no part in the Nestorian-Eutychian and Chalcedonian controversies within the Byzantine empire.

The Persian Church was itself severely persecuted by the Persian Government, under Sapor II (339-379 AD) Bahram V (Ca 420 AD) and Yezdegerd II (Ca 448 AD) But it developed strong monastic, theological and missionary movements during this period; the faith spread not only in Persia, but also in Arabia - specifically in Hirtha Kufa, Najran, Yemen, Zafar, Aden, Sana, Hrmuz.

The most impressive missionary expansion of ancient history began under Patriarch Mar Abha the Great (540-552 AD), a convert from the Magi, a great Zoroastrian teacher and secretary to the Provincial Governor until he became a Christian. A graduate (after conversion) from the Seminary at Nisibis and later professor there, and a devotee of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus, as well as Nestorius of Constantinople, Abha I recognized the Persian Church, travelling all over Persia and taking stern measures against dissident church leaders. This was also the time when Jacob Baradeus (ca 500-578) was recognising the western Syrians (called Jacobites by the West after him); and when these latter were persecuted by the Greeks in the Byzantine empire, they also escaped in large numbers to Persia, and established a rival church (so-called Jacobite) to the Persian (so-called Nestorian).

In the century following, the rise and spread of Islam must have put the stirrup to the Church's galloping missionary activity. The Persian Church produced great leaders through its strong monastic movement and theological school. "Nestorianism" was clearly defined by Mar Babai the Great (569-628) in his Book of the Union (i.e. union of Godhood and Manhood in Christ). With the conquest

of Persia by Muslim Arabs (651 AD), the Nestorian Church was organized as a separate melet (ethnic group), recognized by the Islamic government. With the Patriarchal seat moving from Seleucia - Ctesiphon to Baghdad the cultural capital of the world (ca 775 AD) the head of the Nestorian Church comes to have considerable prestige and political power, with the title Patriarch of Baghdad.

The Nestorians expanded into China Central Asia and India during the 6th to 8th centuries. The Christian monument of Hsi-an-Fu (with Syriac and Chinese inscriptions) speaks about Alopen's missionary journey to China in 635 AD, and his being received gladly by Emperor Tai Tsung. This 9-ft high stone monument was discovered in the Chinese city of Chou-Chi in 1625, and is dated in 781 AD. Replicas of the monument can now be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of the Arts in New York, as well as in Japan. John of Monte Corvino visiting Pekin (Beijing) in 1294 AD still found a powerful Nestorian Community there. There is evidence that the Church had spread into Korea and Japan as well, well before the 13th century. The Nestorian Church spread also among the Monghols, Turks, Tartars, Tibetans. The thirteenth century episcopal lists of the Nestorian Church gives the names of the Metropolitan of the Turks (tenth in rank) with those of Java, India, Samarkhand and China following. There were many Tartar and Monghol kings who embraced the Christian faith.

Latin missionary incursions into the Nestorian Church begin with the 13th century and mark the downfall of this Church. Wherever they could, the Franciscan John of Monte Corvino, the Dominican William of Montferrat and their successors annexed small Nestorian Churches in Asia into the Roman Catholic fold Clement V (1305-1314) who was the first "Captivity Pope" operating from Avignon with the help of the French king Philip and English King Edward I, as well as Pope John XXII (1316-1334) also Avignon-based) made laws for correcting the "errors" of the Nestorians they were annexing, along with the "Jacobites" and others.

By 1445 there is an official Bull of Pope Eugene IV (1431-1447) the great "reunion pope" (Florence 1439), stating that Metropolitan Timothy of the Nestorians has professed the Roman Catholic faith (Hefele, Historie de Conciles t. VII. b.p.1106), and officially giving the name "Chaldeans" to the Nestorians who embraced the Roman Catholic Church. The largest number of "Nestorians" was probably in India, who were annexed forcibly by Portuguese Archbishop Menezes at the notorious Synod of Diamper in 1599. The Chaldeans of Mesopotamia were annexed during the period from 1551 to 1662.



Protestant missions to the Nestorians begin around 1830 with the American Presbyterian, and is joined by Anglican missions in 1835 (SPG).

Today the Nestorians are found mainly the Baghdad and Kurdistan (Iraq), in America and in India. In India the Nestorian Church was revived by Nestorian Bishop John Elias Mellus of Akra who came around 1873, and stayed on in India till 1882.

The head of the Nestorian Church today is

In India there are two bishops -  
Mar Aprem and Mar Paulos.

Mar Shimun group

1. Patriarch Mar Dinkha, Teheran (now USA) —
2. Metropolitan Mar Timotheus, India — 5000.
3. " " Narsai, Iraq — (USA) — also
4. " " Sliva, Bagdad (1) — ~~Habor~~ shadow  
2000
5. Mar Yokhannan Episcopa, Syria — Chicago
6. " Aprim Khamis Episcopa, U.S.A. — Connecticut  
after 12th  
marriage
7. " Claudio, Episcopa, Italy 57
8. " Biscuie " "

Rebel : Mar Joseph Sargis, Bishop of Jelu, Bagdad.

Mar Darmo group

1. Patriarch Mar Adai Geevarghese, Bagdad. ✓ young
2. Mar Aprem Metropolitan, India.
3. " Narsai Thoma Metropolitan, Kirkuk. - Iraq
4. " Thoma Geevarghese Metropolitan, Mosul, Iraq.
5. Poulouse Mar Poulouse, Episcopa, India. ✓
6. Mar Thimotheus Shallitha, Metropolitan  
(consecrated by late Mar Yacob Ignatius Patriarch, Damascus)

Metropolitan of Germany &amp; Europe.

## Membership

Iraq	50,000
Iran	70,000
Syria	20,000
USA	20,000
Australia	9,000
India	30,000
England	1,000
Lebanon	2,000
Europe	0
Germany	0
Italy	0
Greece	0

Total 2,30,000

nearly 2.5 lakhs  
( $\frac{1}{2}$  million)

~~They~~ In India we have two majorities. One Hindu majority.  
The other Muslim group under the W.C.C.

# THE NILE AND THE INDUS

## A GLANCE INTO THE ANCIENT PAST

(Paulos Mar Gregorios, India)

The purpose of this paper is essentially modest. It seeks only to provide one dimension of the ancient relationship between Egypt and India in the early historical past. This could serve as a backdrop to fresh thinking about how that ancient relationship can be restructured today, under conditions so radically different from what they were two millennia ago.

Both Egypt and India have gone through cataclysmic changes in their 3000 years of history. Neither of these civilisations bear much resemblance to what they were in the classical times of Alexander's empire for example. The India as it was in the 4th century B C, described by Megasthenes or Ptolemy bears little resemblance to the India found by the Muslim invaders or Portuguese colonisers a few centuries ago, not to speak of contemporary India. So has Egypt of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies disappeared behind the screen of time. Egypt too was hellenised, romanised, islamised, arabised and anglicised or frenchised in the past several centuries.

I believe that both India and Egypt have identity problems of a somewhat similar nature. We do not know who we are, in terms of understanding the multi-faceted tradition of our own peoples and the historical grasp of how we came to be where we are. We have all entered the realm of a secular western civilisation; we do our best to adjust to that dominant realm; for we were told by our great leaders of the recent past that that was what we had to do if we were to survive or become strong; for some time now we have all been feeling a little uneasy about that secular identity. When frightened by what the alternatives look like, we retreat to our secular identity as much safer than a Hindu or Islamic identity.

Our problems in Egypt and India are similar in that we have large majorities which would like to establish a Hindu or Muslim identity for the whole nation, an identity which millions of people in our countries cannot share. We have a desperate need to clear our memories and renew our understanding of ourselves as nations. On the one hand we need to incorporate our authentic past into our corporate national memories; on the other hand we do not want artificial identities created by fiat or fictitious historiography

and then imposed on our people. So we seek to stick to our secular identity which is no less fictitious than the other proposed artificial religious identities.

I was originally asked to write about the relationship between the Christian Churches of India and Egypt in the early centuries of our era.

The so-called Malabar Christians or St. Thomas Christians in India (to which group the present writer belongs) and the Coptic Christians in Egypt have probably from the beginning of Christianity held the same faith: yet the two groups do not seem to have effected any real mutual contacts, though Greek and other ships were regularly sailing from Egypt to India and back, ever since Hippalus or whoever it was, discovered the use of the regular monsoon winds for navigation around the first century of our era. I could cite the fact that in the 16th century, when the Malabar Christians had been severely harrassed and persecuted by fellow-Christians from Europe, they appealed to three sources for help: the Church of Syria, the Church of Persia and the Church of Egypt. This clearly shows that at least in the 16th and 17th centuries the Indians believed that the Coptic Church of Egypt was of the same faith as they.

I could also mention Clement of Alexandria (ca 150-215 AD), the Church Father and Head of the Catechetical School in Alexandria, who in his Stromateis I (1688 edition, p.305), speaks at length about the philosophers of India and of 'Boutta', the Brahmins and the Sramanas, but does not say anything significant about contacts with the Church in India. This is understandable since Clement's sources were the writings of Arrian or Plutarch, whose sources in turn came from third and fourth century BCE, when there were no Christian churches anywhere.

I could also mention Jerome's Letter LXX where he says that Pantaenus of Alexandria, the founder of the Christian School there in the 2nd century A D, preached to the Brachmanas of India, and that Pantaenus found the Gospel of St. Mathew left in India by St. Bartholomew. We hardly know where Jerome got his information. It is most unlikely that Pantaenus went to India at all. He may have travelled to Nubia or Ethiopia.

A great deal of confusion in ancient records comes from the fact that the Greeks before Alexander did not know their geography. For them the difference between India and Ethiopia was quite minimal. Homer had started the whole confusion by singing (Odyssey I:23-24):

"Aithiopes, toi dixtha dedaiatai, esxatoi andron  
Hoi men dusomenou huperionos, hoi d'aniontos"

Ethiopeans, two kinds, inhabit the ends of the earth  
One towards the setting sun, the other towards the  
rising.

The Greeks generally believed that the territory to the south of Egypt, both East and West, could be called either Ethiopia or India. The confusion persisted even after Alexander's invasion of Egypt and India around 330 BC had brought to Europe much clearer ideas about the valleys of the two great rivers, the Nile and the Sindhu. Strabo tells us that Alexander himself, when he first reached the Indus river, thought it was the Nile.

In any case, the purpose of this paper is simply to draw attention to the contacts between our two civilisations in the few centuries immediately before and after Jesus Christ. No attempt is made to convey any fresh information. I am indebted to those who have thrown light already on this part of our common history.

### **The Ancient River Valley Civilisations**

Humanity has been around on our planet for at least half a million years; yet our historical knowledge goes back hardly 5000 years, a mere 1 per cent of the time we have been existing. 99 per cent of the human past is lost, except for a few geological or archaeological finds.

As far as we can tell, human civilisation first began in the three great river valleys - the Nile, the Tigris-Euphrates and the Indus. What we do not always remember is that these three civilisations were in contact with each other, traded with each other, and learned from each other. For us, who cannot conceive travelling five miles without motorised transport, it is hard to believe that some at least among the ancients travelled tens of thousands of miles, of course taking their time to do so.

Let us take the Mesopotamian civilisation, for example. Mesopotamia includes Ashur (later known as Assyria), as well as Akkad and Sumer (the two together later called Babylonia). In the north human settlements began in the 7th millennium BCE and in the south in the 6th. But it is only around 3500 BCE something like what we call civilisation emerges, with magnificent sculpture and architecture, with well planned cities and irrigation systems. At that time the three river valley civilisations seem to be in contact with each other.

Behind the prosperity of this flourishing Mesopotamian civilisation, a major factor was that Akkad, Sumer and Babylon lay on the major overland route from the Mediterranean (including Egypt) to Iran and India. The Akkadian rulers policed this road; it was the channel through

which the three river valley civilisations met and had mutual concourse. Sargon of Akkad (ca 2334-2279 BCE) and Hammurabi of Babylon (fl. 1792-1750 BCE), famous for his law code, were all in touch with the Indus Valley civilisation to the East and with the Pharaonic civilisation to the South. India has forgotten how much of its mathematics and astronomy it owes to this Mesopotamian civilisation with which it was in frequent contact.

When we come to the Biblical times of Nebuchadnezzar I (1123-1103 BCE), we have many contemporary witnesses in the Jewish scriptures as well as in later testimonies like that of Megasthenes' Indika (4th book). Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador to the court of Emperor Chandragupta of India in the 4th century BCE, speaks of 'Nabuchodrosor' as having been greater than Hercules or Herakles, and that he conquered Iberia and Libya.

Tiglath-pileser III (745-827 BCE) and his successors as rulers of Assyria as well as Babylon, (Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Ashurbanipal) maintained contacts with both the Indian civilisation and the Egyptian. Nineveh, the Capital of Assyria, was then the great cultural centre of the world, like Alexandria four or five centuries later. Its library was enormous and world famous, until it was destroyed in the 7th century BCE. Astronomy, mathematics, the science of agriculture as well as myths and legends were freely exchanged among the three civilisations. Specific contacts between Egypt and India may have left no written or other evidence, but it need not be doubted that the three civilisations were in touch with each other and learned from each other. In the language of Arnold Toynbee, the Mesopotamian valley was a 'round-about' for civilisations, 'where traffic coming in from any point of the compass could be switched to any other point of the compass in any number of alternative combinations'. (A.J. Toynbee, A Study of History, abridged edition, Dell, New York, 1965/1971, vol. 2 p. 164).

The Assyrians occupied Egypt in 671 BCE; but centuries before that the Egyptian Pharaoh Thutmose I (1525 - 1495 BCE) had entered Mesopotamia while driving out the Hyksos from Egypt, and Thutmose III (1490-1436 BCE) had also carried his campaigns right into the Land of the Rivers, or Mesopotamia. In war and peace there was cultural contact between Mesopotamia and Egypt on the one hand; between India and Mesopotamia it was mostly in trade and the exchange of knowledge. And through the Mesopotamian 'round-about' Egypt and India freely gave to and received from each other.

### **The Persian Empire**

It is from Herodotus that we hear that the Persian Emperor Darius (6th century BCE), before invading India, sent Skylax the Karyandian on a voyage of discovery

down the Indus. His 30-month voyage took him from Kaspatyras up the river to its mouth and then on to the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. Skylax visited Africa, Asia and Europe, by sea. A Greek work purporting to be by Skylax, has been dated to the time of Philip of Macedonia (4th century BCE).

The Persian Empire developed around 500 BCE and enveloped parts of both India and Egypt. In India the Magadha kingdom of Bimbisara and Ajatasatru was expanding and contacts with Babylonians and Greeks, as well as with Persians and Bactrians were becoming quite common. Both Egypt and India were heavily influenced by the Persian culture during the 6th and 5th centuries BCE, and even as late as 343 the Nile became part of the Persian Empire. There is no reason to think that these two parts of the wide Persian empire, had no contacts with each other.

### **Alexandria, Metropolis of the World.**

Alexander, the Macedonian conqueror of the Persian empire, was, wittingly or unwittingly a great force in the merging of the five cultures: the Aegean, the Persian (Mesopotamian), the Jewish, the Indian and the Egyptian. And one of the great melting-pots for these five cultures was the city which Alexander founded in 331 BCE on the Delta of the Nile, and which Ptolemy Soter (ca 367 to 285 BCE), friend and general of Alexander, Macedonian Satrap of Egypt from 323 to 285 BCE, built up after Alexander's death. It is most superficial to think of Alexandria primarily as a Hellenic city with a Greek culture. There were no contemporary old world cultures that did not play their role in that great melting-pot of cultures.

Alexandria, the marvel of the Middle East, soon after its founding, thanks to Ptolemy I, became the centre of world culture. At some distance from the interior city was the famous harbour and the well-known Pharos (Lighthouse). The city itself was in three sectors, the Egyptian Sector Rhakotis to the west, the Jewish sector to the East, and the Greek and official sector called Brucheion in the middle. The Museum (University) and the Library provided sources for knowledge which the whole world sought after. At least a hundred research scholars from all over the world carried on work in the humanities and the sciences. Were some of these Indians? Did the Library in Alexandria have some Indian manuscripts?

The Ptolemaic rulers were not merely patrons of culture, but some of them rose to the pinnacle of scholarship themselves. Claudius Ptolemaeus (d. ca 151 AD) whom most people know just as Ptolemy, wrote the 13 books of the He Mathematike Suntaxis (The Mathematical Collection) which became the basis of cosmology, astronomy and the calendar for all civilised nations for centuries till Copernicus came

along. Ptolemy was the Great Astronomer (ho megas astronomos), and it was his work that the 9th century Arab astronomers adopted as the Megiste (the Greatest) or al-megist. The last Ptolemaic ruler was Cleopatra, who virtually handed over Egypt to the Romans, around 30 BCE. These scholarly works of Alexandrian astronomers and mathematicians must have eventually found their way to India.

Alexandria, as far as cosmopolitan culture was concerned, was way ahead of Rome and Athens. To Alexandria the Brahmins (if they travelled at all) and the Buddhist monks came, in search of knowledge as well as to impart the treasures of knowledge from their country. There were great teachers, whether Indian or at least in part influenced by Indian thought, like Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus, who shaped the world culture of that time. The thought of Pythagoras and Plato, the Stoics and the Skeptics, Aristotle and the Neoplatonists, Christians, Jews, Gnostics, and the followers of mystery religions, all flourished side by side and influenced each other. It is from this milieu that all have been able to drink to their hearts' content, Indians and Egyptians, Romans and Greeks, Persians and Arabs.

It is interesting to take some of these great personalities who either lived in Alexandria or influenced it, and to see how wide their own cultural contacts were. Plato himself went to Egypt before founding his Academy around 387 BCE, when Alexandria had not yet been founded. What Plato knew of India and China we cannot tell, but there was no knowledge or knowledgeable person that Plato ignored. Take Pythagoras of Samos (6th century BCE). He travelled extensively in the East and in Egypt before he settled down to teach at Metapontum in South Italy. People say he got most of his basic ideas from India, including that of metempsychosis or transmigration. Without Pythagoras there is no Plato, no western tradition.

There were several Pythagorean communities in Egypt as early as the 5th century BCE. The best known are the Therapeutai or the community of strict Jewish ascetics, who according to Philo's de Vita Contemplativa, seem to have followed a rule that was a mixture of Pythagoras and Plato, Buddha and Moses. Eusebius the Church Historian thought they were Christian sects; in fact they were the product of Alexandrian Judaism in vital interaction with Pythagoras.

And who indeed was Pythagoras, the great contemporary of Buddha? Was the parallelism between Pythagorean insistence on disciplined communities on the one hand and the discipline or vinaya of the Buddhist Sanghas a pure coincidence? Did Pythagoras know about the Buddha, his senior contemporary in India? Is there any substance to the fanciful etymology of his name that it is Puttha (Buddha in Pali or Prakrit) of the Agora (assembly or marketplace)? Was Ammonius



Saccas, the teacher of Plotinus and Origen really a disciple of Buddha whose name is a Greek version of 'Muni Sakya'- a strange combination of Jain and Buddhist titles?

In any case the teachings of the Neo-platonists and Neo-pythagoreans in Alexandria have a strong Indian colouring. Western thinkers stoutly deny the connection: one reason may be sheer reluctance to concede that the roots of western civilisation owe anything to India.

This much we know: Ammonius Saccas taught both Plotinus and Origen that true wisdom came from the East, specifically, India. Plotinus' biographer Porphyry the Syrian has told us clearly that Plotinus ran from teacher to teacher until he found Ammonius Saccas. Ammonius told his disciples that they should go to India. Plotinus tried, but did not get much farther beyond Persia. The Indian element in Alexandria's spiritual culture may have come from many different sources.

We know that Ammonius told his disciples not to talk about their teacher at all (Porphyry: Vita Plotinii, 3). He extracted from his students a promise to that effect. This was what authentic Indian spiritual teachers also would have done. Had Ammonius travelled to India?

We know that the neo-pythagorean sage and miracle-worker Apollonius of Tyana (1st cent AD?), according to Flavius Philostratus who wrote his biography around 220 AD, (vita Apollonii, ed. F C Conybeare, Loeb Classical Library, 2 vols. 1912) had travelled to India, and had extensive conversations with visiting Indian sages.

We know that Bardaisanes(154-222 A D), the heretical (Gnostic?) Syriac hymn-writer of Edessa, who was very influential in Alexandria later, met sages and ambassadors from India who came to the the court of Elagabalus (Porphyry, de Abstinentia, iv. 17). Eusebius the Church historian in his Praeparatio Evangelica (xi.3,28) tells us the anecdote of a conversation between Socrates and a team of Indian sages. Such contacts among Greeks and Indians seem to have been much more common than most of us would have guessed.

I hope there will be a study in the future by competent scholars as to the extent to which Indian scientific and philosophical as well as religious thought was influenced by the culture of Alexandria. The Buddhist and Brahmin travellers who came to Alexandria never seemed to have settled down there. They went back to their land. Their conversations with people at home have left behind no written evidence. But India's culture was vibrant with new ideas precisely during the first few centuries of the Christian era and there is no harm in entertaining the idea that Alexandri-

an influences, particularly what we moderns call neo-Pythagorean and neo-platonist, but also perhaps astronomical and mathematical ideas, filtered through into the Indian culture.

Alexandria cannot be regarded as purely Egyptian or purely hellenic. It was a cosmopolitan culture to which many streams from all over the world contributed, including the Indian. Both India and Egypt have drunk deeply at the fountains of Alexandrian culture, and we should not only express our great gratitude for this generous Alexandrian hospitality, but also do some work in order to make our people more aware of this common aspect of our identity as Egyptians and Indians. Only on the basis of such a common awareness can the foundations for a new relationship between our two countries be forged.

If we are to believe Toynbee, civilisations sometimes absorb a lot of ideas and then go to hibernate. Centuries later, these civilisations come back to life, with the swallowed ideas in a potentially new form. Both the Indian and Egyptian civilisations have swallowed a vast array of ideas and cultures. They both seem to be hibernating at the moment. Are they ready to be woken up?